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ABSTRACT

A study was conducted to explore the influence of newspaper editorial campaign endorsements. The study examined the Louisville (Kentucky) "Courier-Journal," which tends to endorse Democratic candidates, and the Chicago "Tribune," which tends to endorse Republican candidates. It was hypothesized that readers would show higher awareness of editorial endorsements in these two prestige papers than of those in competing papers in the same communities; that readers would see these prestige papers as more balanced and less biased than competing papers in campaign news coverage; and that readers inclined to vote against the endorsed candidate would view the paper as more biased in favor of that candidate than would voters who favored the endorsed candidate. Telephone surveys of 456 residents of Louisville and 364 Chicago residents were conducted. Content analysis of the two papers was conducted from the start of the 1984 presidential campaign through election day. Television network news coverage was also analyzed. Although the great majority of respondents was unaware of which candidate had been endorsed by the paper they read, the readers of the two prestige papers were more likely to know than were readers of the other papers, as hypothesized. The second hypothesis was not supported, while the third received tentative support. (HTH)

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Effect of Editorial Endorsements on Public Perception
Of Leanings in Coverage of a Presidential Election Campaign

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Franklin D. Roosevelt won four sweeping presidential-election victories despite the fact that, in total numbers, newspaper editorial endorsements went as high as 3-1 against him.¹ Such outcomes have led many observers to attribute little influence to editorial pages.

Recently, however, research has suggested that editorials can have significant impact, even in presidential races where partisan leanings affect voting and candidates receive massive news coverage.² Further, endorsements are thought to have more clear-cut influence in local and issue-referendum campaigns where news coverage is often spotty, party labels are largely irrelevant, and voters generally have few cues to go on.³

The present research addresses two questions not clearly studied in past research. First, how many readers actually become aware of editorial endorsements? (After all, an endorsement seemingly could have no direct impact on a reader unless he/she were aware of it!) And second, do readers who are aware of an endorsement attribute a partisan leaning to a paper's news coverage?

The study focused on two cities, each with what is widely regarded as a prestige paper. The Louisville Courier-Journal has endorsed Democratic presidential candidates consistently in recent years--up to and including the 1984 race. And the Chicago Tribune, whose publisher Joseph Medill helped Abraham Lincoln become the Republican Party's first candidate for president, has backed every Republican presidential candidate since.

Each city had a "second" paper, the Times in Louisville and the Sun-Times in Chicago, which had not provided consistent editorial endorsements over a period of 20 or 30 years, though both endorsed Democratic candidate Walter Mondale in 1984. While content data were not studied on these papers, reader perceptions of them were compared with perceptions of the Tribune and Courier-Journal to shed some light on how readers view the prestige press.

In regard to this last issue, two hypotheses were tested.

Hypothesis 1. Readers show higher awareness of editorial endorsements by the prestige papers studied than by "other" papers in the same communities.

Two arguments support this proposition. First, the prestige paper's overall reputation should be clearly defined and widely known by virtue of the paper's role as a leading community voice.

Second, as noted earlier, the Courier-Journal and Tribune had consistently supported presidential candidates of the Democratic and Republican parties, respectively, over a long period, perhaps creating a reputation for party support that would carry over to the 1984 election. In contrast, the competing papers in the same towns had not been so consistent. The Louisville Times had endorsed Democratic candidates in 1948 and in the 1950s and 1960s, according to the Editor and Publisher survey of newspaper endorsements. However, the paper had made no endorsement in 1976 and had not reported endorsements in 1972 or 1980. Also, the Chicago Sun-Times had endorsed Jimmy Carter in 1976 and 1980, perhaps leading some younger voters to regard it as Democratic. However, the Sun-Times had previously swung back and

forth, supporting a Democrat in 1948, the GOP in 1952, 1956 and 1960, a Democrat in 1964 and a Republican in 1968.

Hypothesis 2. Readers see prestige papers as more balanced--and less biased--than "other" local dailies in campaign news coverage.

Presumably, fairness and balance are important aspects of the press as an independent watchdog on public officials and institutions.⁴ Thus, these elements should contribute significantly to journalistic prestige.

Further, in several previous studies, Stempel has found that prestige papers have come very close to a 50-50 split in emphasis on the two major-party candidates during presidential races. In fact, such a split was approximated so closely and consistently that Stempel⁵ concluded it must have reflected conscious intent and not simply coincidence. Also, Hofstetter's study of 1972 campaign coverage revealed few clear partisan leanings. Furthermore, those which did exist often went against popular expectations and appeared to stem from factors other than reporters' and editors' political preferences. For example, the conservative Chicago Tribune gave the Democrats more coverage than the Republicans, while the reverse was true in the liberal Washington Post. In each of these cases, coverage differences between parties appeared to result largely from campaign strategies and candidate activities in the papers' own areas.⁶

A third hypothesis had to do with the probable connection between perceptions of editorial endorsement and those of partisan leaning in news coverage.

Hypothesis 3. Readers inclined to vote against the candidate endorsed by a prestige paper will tend more than supporters of that candidate to perceive the paper as biased in favor of its "endorsee" in news coverage. Furthermore, this will hold only or primarily among relatively lesser-educated readers--and among those aware of editorial endorsements.

The hypothesis posits what social psychologists call a contrast effect--a tendency to perceive a paper opposing one's own position as having a clear-cut, marked opposing stance. At least three distinct bases exist for expecting such a result:

1. Work in psychophysics centering largely on perception of physical quantities such as weight, volume and light intensity. In such research, subjects judge quantities with reference to pre-determined anchors or contextual stimuli. They typically assimilate an object of judgment toward anchors similar to it but contrast the object (perceive it as very different) from anchors quite unlike it. Sherif, Sherif and Nebergall⁷ and Manis⁸ have obtained similar results in judgments of verbal messages on pro-con continua where respondents' own attitudes were viewed as perceptual anchors.

2. Psychological balance theory,⁹ which implies a felt need to agree with a communication source whom we admire but to discount--and perhaps denigrate as being on the "lunatic fringe"--sources with whom we disagree.

In studies of issue stands attributed to Presidential candidates, Granberg and colleagues have found a consistent tendency to assimilate one's preferred candidate to one's own positions on issues, but a less

consistent inclination to contrast non-preferred candidates.¹⁰ These researchers note that the absence of clear contrast effects in candidate rating does not square neatly with balance theory. They believe such findings may stem from something like a "pollyanna effect" (a tendency to think positively and not denigrate even opposing political candidates).¹¹

Of course, none of the above research asked respondents to rate media institutions' stands. However, theoretical and empirical support for Hypothesis 3 does emerge if one assumes that a) editorial support for a candidate one opposes creates a felt need to denigrate the paper, and b) such denigration might sensitize readers to deviations from normative expectations such as fairness or balance in news coverage.

In this connection, several studies suggest a tendency to attribute bias when an article departs from one's expectations and/or disagrees with one's own views. In a signal-stopping study, Stevenson and Greene¹² found a tendency to attribute bias to and question statements with which one disagrees when reading articles. Also, local businessmen have been shown to perceive newspaper business coverage rather unfavorably when raters' own businesses were mentioned in a paper less than expected.¹³ And Kocher and Shaw¹⁴ found a suggestive (not statistically reliable) tendency to perceive a story as biased when that story, on the whole, opposed a reader's own point of view.

The role of education in Hypothesis 3 stems from the tenet in the Sherifs' social-judgment theory that perception hinges on a kind of

"tug of war" among attitudinal, social and cognitive anchors.¹⁵ Presumably, more highly educated people have relatively high awareness of and a tendency to analyze content of news coverage. This, in turn, should provide a basis other than the reader's own attitude for assessing message content, reducing assimilation to or contrast from that attitude in judgment.

Hypothesis 3 was not extended to non-prestige papers because, assuming they have somewhat less credibility than prestige publications, contrast effects could be mild or non-existent with them. In a related vein, Tan¹⁶ found a tendency to assimilate messages attributed to highly credible sources, but not to those with low credibility. Manis¹⁷ and Aronson, et al.,¹⁸ among others, have reported supportive data.

3. People may simply assume that editorial-page endorsements reflect a viewpoint for the entire paper, including news columns. John Robinson¹⁹ found in a study of the 1968 presidential election that almost 90 percent of those within a national sample who perceived newspaper leanings correctly identified local papers' editorial endorsements--even though data apparently came in response to a question on whether a paper's reporting took sides for or against one of the candidates! Apparently, then, few people differentiated clearly between news columns and editorials vis-a-vis the direction of partisan leanings.

Such results suggest an assumption by many news consumers that bias stems largely from partisan preferences and policies of news personnel. However, research by Robinson and Sheehan,²⁰ Hofstetter,²¹

and others suggest that coverage differences between parties or candidates result largely from what Hofstetter calls structural factors such as time-space constraints and commercial imperatives of the news business. The latter, in particular, tend to force coverage of the candidate who is active, visible and inclined to speak or behave in dramatic fashion.

In analysis, if explanation 2 or 3 were correct, the hypothesized tendency of respondents who oppose a paper's endorsement to see the paper as favoring that candidate in news coverage should disappear when one focuses on those not aware of candidate endorsement. And if explanation 1 has validity, the tendency should exist only or primarily among respondents with lesser educations.

Methodology

We conducted telephone surveys in Chicago and Louisville in late October and early November of 1984. Random-digit dialing was used. Interviews were completed with 456 adults in Louisville between October 23 and October 28 and with 364 adults in Chicago between October 31 and November 5.

Interviewing was done by graduate and advanced undergraduate journalism students from the E. W. Scripps School of Journalism at Ohio University. All had previous experience in telephone interviewing and were trained for this specific survey. Interviewers were instructed to make three attempts to reach a number. Completion rates, adjusted for proportion of business phones, were 62% in Louisville and 56% in Chicago. One reason for the lower rate in

Chicago was that we interviewed up to 10 p.m. the night before the election and did not have time to complete the third attempt in most cases in that city.

Content analyses were conducted of the Chicago Tribune and the Louisville Courier-Journal from the official start of the campaign, Labor Day, through November 6. The early evening newscasts for ABC, CBS and NBC also were analyzed for Mondays through Fridays for the same time period. This was part of a larger study that included all the Prestige Press and the news magazines as well as the early-evening network newscasts.

Space was measured in column inches and time in seconds for every story about the Presidential campaign. Stories reporting official governmental acts of President Reagan, Vice-President Bush or Congresswoman Ferraro were not included. Each story was coded as to the main candidate covered. If it dealt with a party but not primarily with a particular candidate, it would be coded accordingly. Thus the options were Reagan, Bush, General Republican, Mondale, Ferraro, General Democratic and neutral. Neutral was defined as meaning no one candidate or party was dominant. Each item also was coded as being favorable, unfavorable or neutral toward the particular candidate. Favorable and unfavorable were defined as encompassing the three major semantic dimensions suggested by Osgood, et al.--potency, evaluative and activity.²² In other words, an item which reflects positive power, evaluation and/or activity was coded as positive. An item which reflects negative power, evaluation and/or activity was

coded as negative. Direction was determined by coding each paragraph and then adding up the results for a given story.²³

For purposes of this report, we have collapsed the directional categories into simply Democratic and Republican. The Democratic category includes items favorable to Mondale, Ferraro and the Democratic Party, and items unfavorable to Reagan, Bush and the Republican Party. The Republican category includes items favorable to Reagan, Bush and the Republican Party, and items unfavorable to Mondale, Ferraro and the Democratic Party. It should be noted that most campaign coverage is favorable to the candidate being covered.

Findings

Some general descriptive information about the samples and their overall perceptions of media coverage follows.

First, both samples had some over-representation of females. Women accounted for 57% of the Louisville respondents for whom gender was recorded, and 58% of those in Chicago.

Second, eliminating "undecided" respondents, 64.5% of those in Chicago said they would vote "today" for Mondale, 35.2% for Reagan. That squared almost perfectly with election returns in the city, which ran 64.5% for Mondale and 35.5% for Reagan. In Louisville, however, the sample's margin for Reagan (62.6% to 37.4%, eliminating don't-knows and no-answers) exceeded the election margin in Jefferson County (57.8% to 42.2%) by almost 5 percentage points. While the discrepancy between survey and election returns was less than two standard errors, it was larger than one might wish for. However, this discrepancy might stem in part from a tendency, shown across the nation, for

undecided voters to move toward Mondale more often than toward Reagan late in the campaign.

Third, most respondents appeared to have made up their minds quite firmly by the time of the survey. In Chicago, 88% said they were very certain they would vote for the candidates they had indicated they would vote for "today." In Louisville, 75% indicated they were very certain. And the number who admitted to being not very certain or not certain at all was small--3% in Chicago and 7% in Louisville. Such widespread certainty (and probably fairly high attitude intensity or involvement) might enhance contrast effects of the type predicted in Hypothesis 3.²⁴

Fourth, level of education was roughly equal in both samples and fairly close to census averages. Twenty-four percent of Chicago respondents reported having college degrees, compared with 21% in Louisville.

Fifth, readership of hometown papers was higher in Louisville than in Chicago. In all, 80% of the Louisville respondents reported subscribing to the Courier-Journal, Times or both. And 52% of the Chicago sample members subscribed to the Tribune, Sun-Times or both.

Sixth, as in past studies, respondents tended to ascribe partisan leanings to press coverage more often when referring to newspapers than to television. In 1968, 50% of users within a national sample felt their newspapers had taken sides in reporting the campaign.²⁵ Percentages here, shown in Table 1 with don't-knows and no-answers excluded, were slightly lower in Louisville but very close to 50% with the Chicago sample. Furthermore, in 1968, only 22% of users had seen

television as similarly partisan in coverage. Comparable figures from the current study were 17% in Louisville and 19% in Chicago.

(Differences among viewers of the three commercial networks were minute and are not reported here.)

Put table 1 about here.

The data in Table 2 support Hypothesis 1. In Chicago, 46% of all Tribune readers correctly reported the paper's Reagan endorsement, compared with only 27% of all Sun-Times subscribers who correctly noted that paper's Mondale leaning. Furthermore, a surprising 17% of the Sun-Times subscribers thought it had endorsed Reagan.

In Louisville, only 31% of Courier-Journal readers demonstrated awareness of that paper's Mondale endorsement. While modest, that figure significantly exceeded the 19% among Times readers.

Overall, then, Table 2 shows that less than one-half of all subscribers were aware of their papers' editorial stances in the presidential race. This figure stands in marked contrast to Robinson's 1968 study, which suggested 90% success in discerning directions of leanings by those who perceived the existence of a leaning. Unfortunately, the present study did not permit separation of those who saw a paper as endorsing the opponent of a candidate who was actually endorsed from respondents who perceived that no endorsement had occurred. Thus data here are not really comparable to Robinson's.

Put table 2 about here.

Hypothesis 2 was not supported. In fact, contrary to expectation, about twice as high a percentage of subscribers saw

prestige papers as leaning in news toward their endorsed candidates as was true with "non-prestige" publications. As shown in Table 3, percentages were 45% for the Tribune, 20% for the Sun-Times, 35% for the Courier-Journal, and 17% for the Times. Apparently, then, attempts by prestige papers to give very balanced coverage did not become clear to quite a number of 1984 readers of the Courier-Journal and Tribune.

Of course, these data may reflect a tendency to "merge" editorial-page and news-column coverage in readers' thinking and not a presumption of purposeful reporting bias. With all four papers, perceived editorial endorsement and perceived leaning in coverage correlated substantially and significantly. Phi coefficients between perceived endorsement and coverage leaning were .55 with the Tribune, .53 with the Courier-Journal, and .35 with the Times. The association was less marked ($\tau c = .12$) with the Chicago Sun-Times, perhaps partly because the editorial-endorsement item there was not coded dichotomously (correct vs. incorrect response).

Put table 3 about here.

Unfortunately, it was not possible to control for response-consistency or halo effect in these analyses. While only suggestive, the data imply that many Louisville and Chicago news consumers perceived that whatever bias existed stemmed in some measure from journalists' partisan leanings and editorial stands. As noted earlier, previous research implies that most inter-party coverage differences in national election campaigns--as covered by the national media--stem largely from what Hofstetter called "structural" factors.

Combining data from both cities on perceived endorsements and coverage leaning, Table 4 suggests that all four papers had something of an image problem. Presumably an editor would hope that his/her readers show awareness of editorial endorsement and believe the paper gives fair, balanced news coverage. However, no more than 11% of the subscribers questioned satisfied both criteria with any one of the papers!

Put table 4 about here.

Hypothesis 3 specifies in part that readers disposed to vote against the candidate endorsed by a prestige paper tend more than supporters of that candidate to perceive the paper as favoring the "endorsee" in news coverage. As shown in table 5, 45% of Courier-Journal subscribers who said they would vote "today" for Reagan felt the paper favored Mondale in news coverage. However, among the subscribers supporting Mondale, only 20% perceived a pro-Mondale leaning in news coverage. The difference between these two percentages was highly significant.

Put table 5 about here.

In Chicago, a comparable trend held. Fifty-four percent of all Tribune subscribers who favored Mondale saw that paper's news-column coverage leaning toward Reagan, the candidate whom the newspaper supported. Only 32% of the Mondale supporters gave a like response. The difference narrowly missed statistical significance--probably because of the small number of Tribune subscribers in the sample.

Hypothesis 3 specifies that the above-noted relationship holds only or primarily among readers aware of a paper's editorial

endorsement. Small subgroup n's did not permit a conclusive test of this proposition. However, Table 5 provides tentative support. In Louisville, 92% of all pro-Reagan voters aware of the Courier-Journal's Mondale endorsement, but only 44% of the "aware" Mondale supporters saw the paper's news coverage as leaning toward the Democrats. The phi coefficient here was a substantial .53. Turning to the "unaware" subscribers, however, the phi became a mild, non-significant .12.

In Chicago, small subgroup n's precluded significance in separate analyses for those aware and those not aware of the Tribune's Reagan endorsement. However, as predicted, the relationship between personal voting intent and perceived news coverage stand proved stronger ($\phi=.27$) among the "aware" respondents than among those who were not aware ($\phi=.03$).

Overall, then, awareness of a prestige paper's endorsement appeared to mediate the impact of people's attitudes on assessment as to fairness of news coverage. Awareness of endorsement may have provided a kind of trigger for voter attitude to color perceptions of coverage.

Another phrase within Hypothesis 3 specifies that the indicated association would hold among less-educated respondents but not clearly or markedly among those with higher educations. Table 6 provides general support. Combining data from both samples, 47% of all subscribers planning to vote against the papers' endorsed candidates saw news coverage as biased against those candidates. Among the

supporters of endorsed candidates, however, the comparable figure was just 25%.

Controlling for education, the basic association just reported held significantly and moderately (with $\phi=.28$) among those without college degrees, but non-significantly and very mildly (with $\phi=.13$) among degree holders.

Put table 6 about here.

While not conclusive, these results suggest that, as social judgment theory implies, subscriber attitude had a substantial and genuine association with assessment of news coverage primarily when a person has little education--and thus probably few information cues to go on in news assessment.

Interestingly, the relationship specified in Hypothesis 3 did not hold with "other papers," the Sun-Times and Times. As noted and predicted earlier, awareness of editorial endorsements by these papers was fairly infrequent under any circumstances.

Also, although data are not reported here, subscribers' own attitudes did not correlate significantly with perceived direction of editorial endorsement by any paper. Presumably an endorsement is usually clear-cut and verifiable. Within news coverage, however, partisan leanings are not spelled out explicitly. Such leanings, like beauty, thus reside largely in the eye of the beholder.

As Table 7 shows, the content analysis did find that each of the two newspapers gave slightly better coverage to the candidate they endorsed. That means that the 35% of the respondents in Louisville who perceived that the Courier-Journal was giving the Democrats more

coverage than they were giving the Republicans were correct.

Likewise, the 45% of the Chicago respondents who thought the Tribune was favoring the Republicans were right. Of course, the difference in Chicago was small, and this raises the question of whether it was the coverage or the expectation to which respondents were reacting.

The coverage by the three television networks varied widely. CBS gave the Democrats slightly better coverage, while NBC gave a

Put table 7 about here.

smaller margin to the Republicans. ABC, however, gave the Republicans a 2-to-1 margin. Yet, respondents were not any more aware of ABC's favoritism than they were of that of the other networks, and nearly as many ABC viewers in both Chicago and Louisville thought ABC coverage favored the Democrats as thought it favored the Republicans. Of course, as noted earlier, the percentage of respondents in either city who thought that TV coverage favored one candidate or the other was much smaller than the percentage who felt newspaper coverage favored a particular candidate.

Conclusions

The major finding here about endorsements is simply that the great majority of respondents were unaware of which candidate the newspaper they read had endorsed. However, as hypothesized, readers of the two prestige papers were more likely to know which candidate their paper had endorsed than were readers of the other two papers. Of those who knew which candidate the paper they read had endorsed, the majority thought that paper favored that candidate in the news

coverage. We hypothesized that this would be less likely to be the case for the two prestige papers, but that was not so. Our content analysis results do indicate the the Louisville Courier-Journal readers and Chicago Tribune readers who believed that those papers favored the candidate they had endorsed were right.

We did find, as expected, that respondents who supported the opponent of the endorsed candidate were more likely to perceive the paper as favoring that candidate than were those who supported the endorsed candidate. We also have a tentative finding that this was more likely to be the case for those who knew which candidate the paper endorsed.

Far fewer respondents perceived that network TV news coverage favored one or the other of the candidates than perceived that newspaper coverage favored a candidate. Since ABC favored the Republicans by a far wider margin than either newspaper favored a candidate, one must wonder why there was so little awareness of this. It may be, of course, that one of the things that an endorsement does is to raise the question of whether or not a newspaper's coverage favors the candidate of its choice. Still, the much higher perception of favoritism in newspaper coverage than in television coverage is a matter deserving serious consideration by endorsing newspapers and researchers alike.

TABLE 1

Percentages of People Reporting That Newspapers and Television News
Favored One Presidential Candidate or the Other in News Coverage

	<u>Newspapers</u>		<u>Television</u>
Percent in 1968 Study*	50%	Percent in 1968 Study*	22%
Percent of Louisville sample seeing <u>Courier- Journal</u> as favoring one side or other (n=210)	45%	Percent of Louisville sample seeing TV networks as favoring one side or other (n=275)	17%
Percent of Louisville sample seeing <u>Times</u> as favoring one side or other (n=139)	39%	Percent of Chicago sample seeing TV networks as favoring one side or other (n=172)	19%
Percent of Chicago sample seeing <u>Tribune</u> as favoring one side or other (n=95)	52%		
Percent of Chicago sample seeing <u>Sun-Times</u> as favoring one side or other (n=104)	49%		

*Gained in response to question: "Would you say that the (newspaper, radio station, magazine, television station) reporting you (heard, read) took sides either for or against one of the candidates or parties, or that it did not take sides?" See John P. Robinson, "Perceived Media Bias and the 1968 Vote: Can the Media Affect Behavior After All?" Journalism Quarterly 49(2):239-46 (Summer 1972).

Except for top row of table, all data stemmed from present study, with data collected in October and November 1984. The reported base figure for each percentage excludes don't know and no-answer responses.

TABLE 2

Percentages of Interviewed Subscribers Who Correctly Identified Presidential
Endorsements by Prestige and Other Newspapers in Chicago and Louisville

<u>City</u>	<u>Prestige Paper^a</u>	<u>Other Paper^b</u>	<u>Chi-square</u>	<u>Probability</u>
Chicago	46% (n=100)	27% (n=125)	7.77 (df=1)	<.01
Louisville	31% (n=210)	19% (n=230)	7.65 (df=1)	<.01

^aPrestige papers studied were the Courier-Journal in Louisville and the Tribune in Chicago. The Courier-Journal endorsed Democrat Walter Mondale, while the Tribune endorsed Republican Ronald Reagan.

^bOther papers studied were the Times in Louisville and the Sun-Times in Chicago. Both papers endorsed Mondale.

TABLE 3

Percentages of Interviewed Subscribers Who Saw Prestige and Other Newspapers
in Chicago and Louisville as Favoring Editorially Endorsed Presidential Candidates
in News Coverage

<u>City</u>	<u>Prestige Paper^a</u>	<u>Other Paper^b</u>	<u>Chi-square^c</u>	<u>Probability</u>
Chicago	45% (n=100)	20% (n=125)	23.59 (df=2)	<.01
Louisville	35% (n=210)	17% (n=230)	23.88 (df=2)	<.01

^aPrestige papers studied were the Courier-Journal in Louisville and the Tribune in Chicago. The Courier-Journal endorsed Democrat Walter Mondale, while the Tribune endorsed Republican Ronald Reagan.

^bOther papers studied were the Times in Louisville and the Sun-Times in Chicago. Both papers endorsed Mondale.

^cChi-squares had 2 degrees of freedom because, within each paper, subscribers were divided into subgroups seeing a pro-Mondale leaning, a pro-Reagan leaning and no leaning.

TABLE 4

Percentages of Interviewed Subscribers to Each Newspaper Who Noted That Paper's
1984 Endorsement Correctly and Saw the Paper as Favoring Neither Candidate
in News Coverage

<u>Newspaper</u>	<u>Percentage Meeting Both Criteria</u>	<u>Number of Subscribers Interviewed</u>
Louisville <u>Courier-Journal</u>	6%	210
Louisville <u>Times</u>	9%	238
Chicago <u>Tribune</u>	10%	100
Chicago <u>Sun-Times</u>	11%	125

TABLE 5

Percentages of Interviewed Courier-Journal and Tribune Subscribers
Who Would Vote for or Against Candidates Whom Papers Endorsed Editorially
and Who Saw Papers As Favoring Those Candidates in News Columns

City	Would Vote for Endorsed Candidate "Today"	Would vote for Non-Endorsed Candidate "Today"	Chi-Square and Probability ^a	Phi
Louisville (all voting interviewed subscribers)	20% (n=64)	45% (n=114)	9.58 df=1 p<.01	.22
Louisville (those aware of endorsement)	44% (n=18)	92% (n=39)	11.66 df=1 p<.01	.53
Louisville (those not aware of endorsement)	11% (n=46)	20% (n=75)	-----	.12
Chicago (all voting interviewed subscribers)	32% (n=34)	54% (n=41)	3.42 df=1 p=.06	.21
Chicago (those aware of endorsement)	61% (n=13)	85% (n=20)	-----	.27
Chicago (those not aware of endorsement)	14% (n=21)	24% (n=21)	-----	.03

The Louisville Courier-Journal endorsed Walter Mondale editorially, while the Chicago Tribune supported Ronald Reagan.

^aIn blank cells of this column, cell-expected values were too small to permit chi-square tests. However, these subgroup phi coefficients are reported for comparative purposes.

TABLE 6

Percentage of Interviewed Local Prestige Papers' Subscribers Who Would Vote For or Against Candidates Endorsed by Those Papers and Who Saw Papers as Favoring in News Columns the Parties of the Endorsed Candidates

	"Would Vote Today" For Candidate Endorsed by Paper ^a	"Would Vote Today" Against Candidate Endorsed by Paper	Chi-Square	p	phi
Perceived Paper as Favoring Party of Endorsed Candidate (All respondents)	25% (98)	47% (155)	12.04 1 df	<.001	.23
Perceived Paper as Favoring Party of Endorsed Candidate (Persons without college degrees)	17% (70)	44% (111)	11.82 1 df	<.001	.28
Perceived Paper as Favoring Party of Endorsed Candidate (Persons with college degrees)	43% (28)	56% (43)	0.68 1 df	>.05	.13

Each number in parentheses is the base figure for computation of the corresponding percentage.

^aThe Louisville Courier-Journal endorsed Walter Mondale, while the Chicago Tribune supported Ronald Reagan.

TABLE 7

Percentage of Space or Time Devoted to Each Side in Coverage
of the 1984 Presidential Campaign by the Chicago Tribune, the Louisville
Courier-Journal and the Network Television Early Evening Newscasts

	<u>Democratic</u>	<u>Republican</u>	
Chicago <u>Tribune</u>	47.7%	52.3%	(4,595 column inches)
Louisville <u>Courier-Journal</u>	57.9%	42.1%	(3,719 column inches)
ABC	33.3%	66.7%	(13,077 seconds)
CBS	54.0%	46.0%	(9,764 seconds)
NBC	48.6%	51.4%	(16,134 seconds)

(Neutral space and time excluded)

Footnotes

¹Verne E. Edwards, Jr., Journalism in a Free Society (Dubuque, Iowa: William C. Brown Company, 1970), p. 169.

²Robert E. Hurd and Michael W. Singletary, "Newspaper Endorsement Influence on the 1980 Presidential Election Vote," Journalism Quarterly, 61:332-338 (Summer 1984); John P. Robinson, "The Press as King Maker: What Surveys from Last Five Campaigns Show," Journalism Quarterly, 51:587-594, 606 (Winter 1974).

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⁴Fred S. Siebert, Theodore Peterson and Wilbur Schramm, Four Theories of the Press (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1963), pp. 87-92.

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